

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Statement on the Day of Remembrance of Japanese American Incarceration During World War II

February 19, 2023

When President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, 81 years ago today, it ushered in one of the most shameful periods in American history. The wrongful internment of 120,000 Americans of Japanese descent tore families apart. Men, women, and children were forced to abandon their homes, their jobs, their communities, their businesses, and their way of life. They were sent to inhumane concentration camps simply because of their heritage. And in a tragic miscarriage of justice, the Supreme Court upheld these immoral and unconstitutional policies.

Despite losing liberty, security, and the fundamental freedoms that rightfully belonged to them, 33,000 Japanese Americans volunteered or were drafted for service in the U.S. military during World War II. While their own families were behind barbed wires, Japanese Americans fought in defense of the Nation's freedom with valor and courage.

The incarceration of Japanese Americans reminds us what happens when racism, fear, and xenophobia go unchecked. As we battle for the soul of our Nation, we continue to combat the corrosive effects of hate on our democracy and the intergenerational trauma resulting from it. We reaffirm the Federal Government's formal apology to Japanese Americans for the suffering inflicted by these policies. And we commit to *Nidoto Nai Yoni*—to "let it not happen again."

Categories: Statements by the President : Japanese American Incarceration During World War II, Day of Remembrance of.

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